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RURAL DISTRICT OF BATTLE

Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the year 1954

M. I. SILVERTON,
T.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

F. J Parsons, Ltd., Bexhill

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INDEX

Accidents in the Home 21
Ambulance Service 19
Analysis of Inspections during 1954 37
Births and Birth Rates.. 5
Building Licensing 37
Cesspool Emptying 30
Clean Food 21
Comparative Statistics 5
Deaths and Death Rates 6
Deaths—65 Years of Age and Over 7
Deaths—Detailed Causes 7
Diphtheria Immunisation 16
Factories Act, 1937 31
General Provision of Health Services in the Area 19
Home Physiotherapy Service 20
House Requisitioning 37
Housing 32
Housing Act, 1949. Improvement Grants 33
Ice Cream 22
Industries 30
Infant Welfare Centres 18
Infectious Diseases in Age Groups 12
Infectious Diseases—Incidence 9
Infectious Diseases—Distribution in Parishes 13
Infectious Diseases—Ministry of Education Recommendations re exclusion 14
Infectious Diseases—Seasonal Incidence 13
Influenza 15
Inspection of Meat and Other Foods 22
Meteorology 38
Milk Production 23
Moveable Dwellings in Coastal Areas 36
National Assistance Act, 1948 20
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children .. 20
New Dwellings 36
Prevention of Damage by Pests Acts, 1949 37
Public Health Act, 1936, and Housing Act, 1936 32
Public Health Laboratory Service 20
Refuse Collection 30
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal 29
Tuberculosis 8
Vaccination 18
Water—Distribution of Piped Supplies in Parishes 27
Water Samples 28
Water Supply—General 24
Water Supply—Schools 28

THE RURAL DISTRICT OF BATTLE

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(constitution at 31st December, 1954)

Chairman:

The Hon. Miss E. D. Courthope

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. E. A. Paine

Mr. G. Barling, J.P. (Chairman of the Council)

Mr. P. G. Armitage
Mr. C. H. Barham
Mr. S. J. Comber
Mr. C. J. Gray
Brig. A. B. Macdonald
Sir Alan Moore, Bt., M.B., D.P.H.
Comdr. J. D. Ross, J.P.
Mr. H. W. G. Taylor
Mrs. E. Woodgate
Mr. E. Woollard

STAFF OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Medical Officer of Health:

M. I. Silverton, T.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Senior Sanitary Inspector:

W. Francis, Cert.R.S.I., Meat and Foods Cert.

Sanitary Inspectors:

W. T. Dunford, Cert.S.I.B., Meat and Foods Cert.
K. G. Bewick, Cert.S.I.B., Meat and Foods Cert.
R. E. Briggs, D.P.A., Cert.S.I.B., Meat and Foods Cert.
G. J. Allen, Cert.S.I.B., Meat and Foods Cert.

Chief Clerk:

Miss M. E. Portnell

**Diphtheria Immunisation and Vaccination Clerk:*

Miss M. H. Hearnshaw

Shorthand-Typists and General Clerks:

Mrs. E. G. Kemp
Miss W. R. Burt
Miss M. C. Laird (to 13/2/54)
Mr. C. W. Field (from 1/3/54)

Rat Catcher:

Mr. R. Elliott

*County Staff employed locally

To the Chairman and Councillors of Battle Rural District Council.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1954, this being the coming-of-age for this District (formed in 1934), the increase in the penny rate from £670 to £910 being a pointer to its increasing strength and importance.

The statistics reveal that the health of the District compares favourably with the rest of England and Wales. A comparable series of figures (where available) relating to the year 1934 is included.

The immunisation campaign against diphtheria is pursued with undiminished vigour, its success is exemplified by the absence of any cases during the past nine years, but this is no reason for complacency. A relaxation in our efforts would see the return of this deadly disease.

Water and sewerage schemes are one of the main pre-occupations of the Public Health Committee, and it is gratifying to see these necessary amenities to healthy living being pursued with such vigour and foresight.

New housing, both Council and private enterprise, is making great strides and the sub-standard house is gradually being eliminated.

Mr. Francis (Chief Sanitary Inspector) and his able team of Sanitary Inspectors give this District a first-class service; a potent influence in promoting and conserving the health of the people.

The Chief Clerk (Miss Portnell) and the Office Staff are an efficient team, reliable and painstaking in their duties. The thorough and careful work of the Immunisation Clerk (Miss Hearnshaw) is a major contributory factor to the success of the Immunisation campaign against preventable diseases.

I am obliged to the Clerk of the Council and other Chief Officers for their co-operation at all times.

I am grateful to the Councillors, and in particular, the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee, for their stimulating interest and support.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

M. I. SILVERTON,

Medical Officer of Health.

The Watch Oak,
Battle, Sussex.

STATISTICS RELATING TO BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT

	1934	1952	1953	1954
Area of district in acres (estimated)	119,972	117,147*	117,147	117,147
Population (Registrar General's estimate for mid-year)	28,991	29,770	29,700	29,780
Rateable Value	£174,408	£219,960	£225,305	£230,397
Sum represented by a penny rate	£670	£875	£895	£910
Number of rateable premises at 1st April ..	9,976	11,484	11,690	11,893

*The Hastings Corporation (General Powers) Act, 1937, was responsible for the diminution in area.

BIRTHS AND BIRTH RATES

	1934			1954		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Live Births:						
Legitimate	171	138	309	197	171	368
Illegitimate	10	16	26	5	6	11
	181	154	335	202	177	379
Stillbirths:						
Legitimate	3	5	8	2	3	5
Illegitimate	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	5	8	2	3	5

	1934		1954	
	Battle R.D.	England and Wales	Battle R.D.	England and Wales
Live birth rate per 1,000 home population	13.3	14.8	12.72	15.2
Corrected birth rate	Not available	—	15.0	—
Still birth rate per 1,000 births (live and still)	23.32	Not available	13.19	23.4
Still birth rate per 1,000 home population	0.2	—	0.16	0.36

The increased proportion of aged people in the population of this District will account for the apparently decreased birth rate as compared with England and Wales, the Corrected Birth Rate discounts this bias and makes it possible to compare these figures on the basis of similarly constituted populations.

The Death Rate is " Corrected " in order to be comparable with that for England and Wales, the comparability factor being 0.70.

DEATHS AND DEATH RATES

Death Rates:	1934 *Battle R.D.*	1934 *England and Wales*	1954 *Battle R.D.*	1954 *England and Wales*
Death Rate per 1,000 of resident population (Crude) ..	13.09	11.8	14.9	11.3
Corrected death rate	10.73	—	10.43	—
Deaths of infants under 1 year	12	35,017	6	17,098
Death rate of infants under 1 year per 1,000 live births ..	35.82	59.0	15.83	25.5
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births ..	Nil	4.62	Nil	0.69

The figure for deaths in infants under one year for the current year (15.83) is an improvement on the past year (18.46) and is significant when compared with 1934 (35.82).

Although our figures are small to be of much value statistically in themselves, it will be noted that this trend is confirmed when the rates for England and Wales are compared in the years under review.

This confirms the generally accepted opinion that the infant mortality rate is probably the most informative index we possess when assessing the sanitary and social circumstances of a district, *e.g.* poor housing, overcrowding, and defective sanitation. Parental ignorance and neglect are potent factors in raising the rate.

DEATH RATES FROM SPECIFIC CAUSES
PER 1,000 POPULATION

	England and Wales	Battle R.D.
Typhoid and paratyphoid	0.00	——
Whooping cough	0.00	——
Diphtheria	0.00	——
Tuberculosis	0.18	0.20
Influenza	0.04	0.03
Smallpox	——	——
Acute poliomyelitis & polioencephalitis	0.00	——
Pneumonia	0.41	0.70
Coronary disease and Angina pectoris	1.51	1.81

DETAILED CAUSES OF DEATH

	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	3	3	6
Syphilitic disease	0	1	1
Infective and parasitic diseases (excluding measles)	3	0	3
Malignant neoplasms	34	33	67
Diabetes	0	1	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system	28	34	62
Coronary disease, angina	32	22	54
Hypertension with heart disease	5	5	10
Other heart disease	46	55	101
Other circulatory disease	7	12	19
Influenza	0	1	1
Pneumonia	9	12	21
Bronchitis	8	2	10
Other diseases of the respiratory system	5	2	7
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	3	0	3
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1	4	5
Nephritis and nephrosis	5	5	10
Hyperplasia of prostate	5	0	5
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	1*	1
Congenital malformations	2	1	3
Other defined or ill-defined diseases	22	18	40
Motor vehicle accidents	1	2	3
All other accidents	2	5	7
Suicide	0	4	4
	221	223	444

*The interval between the maternal condition and death exceeded 12 months

MAIN CAUSES OF DEATH

	1952	1953	1954
(i) Diseases of the heart and circulatory system	172 (43.9%)	183 (42.7%)	184 (41.4%)
(ii) Malignant neoplasms (cancer)	59 (14.9%)	58 (13.5%)	67 (15.9%)
(iii) Vascular lesions of the nervous system	45 (11.4%)	68 (15.8%)	62 (13.9%)
(iv) Respiratory diseases (excluding tuberculosis)	30 (7.8%)	23 (5.3%)	28 (6.3%)

DEATHS—65 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER

	Battle R.D.			England and Wales		
	1952	1953	1954	1952	1953	1954
Total deaths	394	428	444	40,368	36,636	34,469
Number of deaths 65 years and over	278	322	322	26,368	25,821	23,563
Percentage of total deaths	70.5	75.2	72.5	66.3	66.8	68.3

TUBERCULOSIS

	Pulmonary Cases			Non-Pulmonary Cases			Total Cases (all forms)		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1. No. on Register at 1st January, 1954 ..	56	57	113	14	14	28	70	71	141
2. Cases previously removed and renotified in 1954 ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
3. Primary notifications received in 1954 ..	6	7	13	—	2	2	6	9	15
4. Cases moved into area as transfers ..	7	4	11	—	—	—	7	4	11
Totals	70	68	138	14	16	30	84	84	168
5. Cases removed from Register in 1954 ..	18	28	46	5	4	9	23	32	55
6. Number on Register at 31st December, 1954	52	40	92	9	12	21	61	52	113

	1953 Total Cases (all forms)			1954 Total Cases (all forms)		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1. Number on Register at 1st Jan.	80	87	167	70	71	141
2. Cases previously removed and re-notified during year ..	1	—	1	1	—	1
3. Primary notifications received during year	6	6	12	6	9	15
4. Cases moved into area as transfers	3	8	11	7	4	11
Totals	90	101	191	84	84	168
5. Cases removed from Register during year	20	30	50	23	32	55
6. Number on Register at 31st Dec.	70	71	141	61	52	113

ANALYSIS OF REMOVALS IN 1954

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Total Cases (all forms)		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
Left District	9	10	1	—	10	10	20
Cured	3	14	4	4	7	18	25
Died	*5	4	—	—	5	4	9
Rediagnosed—not tuberculosis	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
	18	28	5	4	23	32	55

*Two males died in 1953 but removed from Register in 1954.

Tabulated lists (in age groups) of New Cases notified in this District and all Deaths during the current year :

Age	New Cases (Primary Notifications)				*All Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0— 2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3— 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6—10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
11—15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16—25	—	2	—	1	—	—	—	—
26—35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
36—45	1	2	—	—	1	2	—	—
46—60	3	3	—	1	—	1	—	—
Over 60	2	—	—	—	3	2	—	—
Totals	6	7	—	2	4	5	—	—

*One male and two females died from causes not primarily tuberculosis.
One female death attributed to pulmonary tuberculosis occurred in an unnotified case which was fully investigated soon after death.

INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS FOR THE YEARS 1949-1954
1st JANUARY-31st DECEMBER

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
Diphtheria	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acute poliomyelitis	1	3	0	8	7	2
Meningococcal infection	0	3	1	2	1	0
Measles	422	69	410	190	1,051	5
Scarlet fever	32	35	22	87	29	14
Whooping cough	42	162	251	72	214	129
Acute pneumonia	23	23	25	34	29	23
Erysipelas	6	8	2	7	3	10
Puerperal pyrexia	1	0	1	3	0	1
Dysentery	0	0	1	1	0	21
Food poisoning	0	1	5	0	2	1
Acute encephalitis	0	0	0	0	1	0

Poliomyelitis

There were two cases of poliomyelitis. One occurred in July (non-paralytic) and the second in November (paralytic—no residual disability). There was no evidence of spread from either case, although the case which occurred in July was Matron of a boys' preparatory boarding school.

Investigation revealed that she herself had been in contact with a Paralytic case of poliomyelitis while on a visit to her parents' home out of the District; in this case the incubation period could not have been more than three days, which is unusually short. The school in question ended the summer term on the 24th July, and it was therefore considered necessary to inform all parents of the occurrence and the need for care and surveillance during the remaining time of the possible incubation period of three weeks, a pamphlet from the Central Council of Health Education was included with each parents' letter. In addition the Medical Officers of Health of all districts concerned were notified of the details of this occurrence.

Measles

A quiet year, but one can expect a much increased incidence in 1955; this follows the usual pattern.

Scarlet Fever

Mild in character and of no special significance, the usual investigations were made in each case regarding the possibility of food handlers being involved, and where indicated alternative work was advised and accepted.

Dysentery and Food Poisoning

(*a*) In November a schoolboy was found to be excreting Salmonella Typhi murium following a bout of diarrhoea and vomiting.

Full investigation did not reveal the portal of entry and no other member of his family circle was affected. He continued to excrete the organism until the end of December, and subsequently three negative samples were submitted in January, 1955.

(*b*) In June an explosive outbreak of acute diarrhoea occurred in a residential school of approximately 75 boys with a total population (including staff) of about 100 persons.

It appeared likely that the infection occurred through meat pies eaten for lunch on Wednesday, 16th June. The pies were prepared from a mixture of fresh beef cooked the evening before and mixed in the morning with two tins of Irish steak; after being placed in the pie-dish this mixture was supplemented with the contents of three tins of braised pork kidneys straight from the tins.

Nineteen junior boys and four staff who all fed from pies at the junior tables were affected.

Nine of the domestic staff who fed separately from a special pie (stated to have contained a higher proportion of kidney) were also affected.

The symptoms occurred 12 to 14 hours after the meal, and consisted of acute abdominal pain and diarrhoea from 1 to 6 times over a period of four to eight hours. Only one person vomited, the assistant cook, who stated that she tasted the kidney straight from the tin and ate two large helpings of the pie. She vomited within two hours of the meal and diarrhoea commenced within eight hours.

Samples of (1) staff pie; (2) mixture of the residue of all the pies; (3) an unopened tin of kidney; and (4) faeces from nine members of staff and pupils were submitted for bacteriological examination.

The results were as follows:—

No. 1. Meat pie (staff) revealed *Cl. welchii*.
No. 2. Meat pie (mixed) revealed *Cl. welchii*.
No. 3. Canned kidney sterile.
No. 4. Faeces revealed heat-resistant strain of *Cl. welchii*.

Salmonella, dysentery and enteric groups of organisms not isolated.

The outbreak was typical of food poisoning by *Cl. welchii*—a short sharp attack, which lasted about one day, with no aftermath.

The beef cooked the previous night, plus the large bulk of meat pie allowed to cool slowly and not refrigerated, gave the optimum conditions in the centre for the multiplication of this anaerobic organism.

The cooking of meat the previous day for consumption on the next day is always a dangerous procedure, and although quick cooling and efficient refrigeration may make infection unlikely, there is always an element of risk.

In my Annual Report for 1953 I gave details of an outbreak of dysentery in a Hospital for Mental Defectives, and at the end of that year one case of *Shigella sonnei* remained. This carrier has been sampled several times during the current year and is still excreting this organism.

It is a tribute to the careful hygiene practised in this hospital that this remains an isolated case.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN AGE GROUPS

	Under 1 year	1–2 years	3–4 years	5–9 years	10–14 years	15–24 years	25–44 years	45–64 years	65 and over	Totals
Scarlet fever ..	—	—	2	10	1	—	—	1	—	14
Whooping cough ..	5	24	35	58	1	1	4	1	—	129
Acute poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2
Measles ..	—	2	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	5
Acute pneumonia ..	2	2	—	2	1	1	3	8	4	23
Erysipelas ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6	3	10
Food poisoning	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Dysentery ..	—	4	3	8	—	3	3	—	—	21
Puerperal pyrexia ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Totals ..	7	32	40	80	5	6	13	16	7	206

Whooping cough is a distressing and potentially disabling disease, particularly in the younger age groups.

It is gratifying to note that the County Council agreed to the immunisation of children with combined Whooping cough and Diphtheria antigen commencing 1st April, 1954. One is therefore hopeful that future years will show a marked reduction in the incidence of this infection.

DISTRIBUTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE VARIOUS PARISHES

	Measles	Whooping cough	Scarlet fever	Acute pneumonia	Erysipelas	Acute poliomyelitis	Food poisoning	Dysentery	Puerperal pyrexia	Estimated Population
Ashburnham ..	—	—	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	380
Battle	1	24	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	4,371
Beckley ..	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	962
Bodiam ..	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	377
Brede	—	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1,211
Brightling ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	408
Broomhill ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	270
Burwash ..	1	32	—	2	1	—	1	—	—	2,027
Catsfield ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	730
Crowhurst ..	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	627
Dallington ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	348
East Guldeford ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	109
Etchingham ..	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	585
Ewhurst ..	—	7	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	822
Fairlight ..	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	932
Guestling ..	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	970
Hurst Green ..	—	11	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	760
Icklesham ..	2	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	1,794
Iden	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	431
Mountfield ..	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	622
Northiam ..	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,500
Ore	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	328
Peasmarsh ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	733
Penhurst ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	56
Pett	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	557
Playden ..	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	291
Rye Foreign ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19	—	273
Salehurst ..	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,509
Sedlescombe ..	—	4	1	2	1	—	—	—	—	705
St. Thomas the Apostle, Winchelsea ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	178
Ticehurst ..	—	—	1	4	2	1	—	2	1	2,385
Udimore ..	—	—	—	3	2	—	—	—	—	354
Westfield ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1,494
Whatlington ..	—	4	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	266
Totals ..	5	129	14	23	10	2	1	21	1	

SEASONAL INCIDENCE OF NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Totals
Scarlet fever ..	1	—	3	—	3	2	1	—	—	—	2	2	14
Whooping cough	2	1	1	14	18	14	35	15	12	4	3	10	129
Acute poliomyelitis ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2
Measles ..	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	5
Acute pneumonia	2	2	1	—	—	1	2	3	3	1	1	7	23
Erysipelas ..	—	1	—	4	1	—	—	—	—	1	3	—	10
Food poisoning ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Dysentery ..	—	19	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21
Puerperal pyrexia ..	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals ..	5	23	6	20	23	17	39	20	17	6	11	19	206

PERIODS OF EXCLUSION IN CERTAIN INFECTIOUS DISEASES MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

	Usual Incubation period (days)	Interval between onset and appearance of rash (days)	Period of exclusion	
			Patients	Contacts, i.e. the other members of the family or household living together as a family, that is, in one tenement.
Scarlet Fever	1–7	1–2	7 days after discharge from hospital or from home isolation (unless "cold in the head," discharge from the nose or ear, sore throat or "septic spots" be present	7 days after removal of patient to hospital or the beginning of his isolation at home.
Diphtheria	2-7	—	Until pronounced by a medical practitioner to be free from infection	7 days after the removal of the patient to hospital, or the beginning of his isolation at home. If there be any suspicious signs the child should be excluded further until pronounced by a medical practitioner to be free from infection.
Measles ..	7-14	3-4	14 days after the appearance of the rash if the child appears well	Infants who have not had the disease should be excluded for 14 days from the date of appearance of the rash in the last case in the house. Other contacts can attend school. Any contacts suffering from a cough, cold, chill, or red eyes should be immediately excluded.
German Measles	5-21	0-2	7 days from the appearance of the rash	None.
Whooping Cough	0-18	—	28 days from the beginning of the characteristic cough	Infants who have not had the disease should be excluded for 21 days from the date of onset of the disease in the last case in the house.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS—*continued*

	Usual Incubation period (days)	Interval between onset and appearance of rash (days)	Period of exclusion	
			Patients	Contacts, i.e. the other member of the family or household living together as a family, that is, in one tenement.
Mumps ..	12–28	—	14 days from the onset of the disease or 7 days from the subsidence of the swelling	None.
Chicken Pox ..	11-21	—	14 days from the date of the appearance of the rash	None.

INFLUENZA

During December and continuing into February, 1955, there was increased absenteeism due to illness in schools, both national and private, particularly in the Westfield area.

The cases occurring in December were characterised by a short, sharp febrile attack lasting about two days, with fairly rapid recovery. In February, 1955, the illness was more lengthy and many cases were complicated by ear and lung infections; convalescence was generally of longer duration.

However, bloods taken by me during December and February and submitted for Virus identification revealed Influenza B in both series.

All General Practitioners in the area were notified of this prevalence.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The continuing percentage increase of children immunised under 5 years is noted with satisfaction although not complacency.

There are still over 20% remaining at risk and this Department is perpetually stressing the necessity for full protection from this dread disease.

Figures for 1954

One hundred and ninety clinics were held in 1954 (45 sessions).

Number of children who received injections in 1954:

Primary Immunisation:

	Under 1 yr.	1	2	3	4	5–9	10–14	*Total*
Treated at clinics	47	59	9	5	3	50	17	190
By private doctors	152	79	8	4	4	11	—	258
Reinforcing injections:								
Treated at clinics	—	—	—	—	43	294	218	555
By private doctors	—	—	—	—	16	54	32	102

Totals—Under 5 370
5-14 (inc.) 78
Reinforcing 657

Since 1st April, 1954, combined immunisation against whooping cough and diphtheria has been available. The following children have received the combined protection (these are included in the numbers given above):

Primary Immunisation:

	Under 1 yr.	1	2	3	4	5–9	10–14	*Total*
Treated at clinics	27	30	1	2	—	1	—	61
By private doctors	116	53	7	2	4	8	—	190
Reinforcing injections:								
Treated at clinics	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
By private doctors	—	—	—	—	3	8	1	12

Totals—Under 5 242
5—14 (inc.) 9
Reinforcing 14

Total number of children under 15 years of age, resident in the area, who had been immunised by 31st December, 1954:

Under 5 years	1,323
5—14 (inc.)	4,264
	5,587

Comparative figures for the past three years:

	1952	1953	1954
Number immunised under 5 years	1,368	1,292	1,323
Child population (under 5) ..	2,081	1,745	1,673
Percentage of child population (under 5)	65.73%	74.04%	79.07%
Number immunised 5—14 (inc.) ..	4,143	4,132	4,264
Child Population 5—14 (inc.) ..	4,326	4,329	4,466
Percentage of child population (5—14)	95.76%	95.44%	95.47%

(Population figures are estimated—Registrar General is unable to supply them.)

Diphtheria Immunisation percentages for Schools.

School	No. on Register	No. Immunised	Percentage
Ashburnham C.P.	65	62	95.38
Battle V.P.	355	341	96.05
Beckley V.P.	60	59	98.33
Bodiam V.P.	58	56	96.55
Brede C.P.	78	74	94 87
Burwash V.P.	143	129	90.20
St. Philip's, Burwash Common	80	79	98.75
Catsfield V.P.	72	66	91.66
Crowhurst V.P.	65	62	95.38
Dallington V.P.	46	42	91.30
Etchingham V.P.	35	34	97.14
Ewhurst V.P.	23	23	100.00
Fairlight V.P.	34	33	97.05
Guestling V.P.	56	55	98.21
Hurst Green V.P.	76	71	93.42
Icklesham V.P.	44	42	95.45
Mountfield and Whatlington V.P.	130	126	96.92
Netherfield V.P.	90	89	98.88
Northiam V.P.	111	109	98.19
Peasmarsh V.P.	70	66	94.28
Pett V.P.	44	37	84.09
Playden V.P.	40	39	97.50
Salehurst V.P.	206	193	93.68
Sedlescombe V.P.	111	106	95.49
Staplecross V.P.	52	50	96.15
Stonegate V.P.	48	48	100.00
Ticehurst V.P.	177	163	92.09
Udimore C.P.	39	39	100.00
Westfield C.P.	160	152	95.00
Winchelsea V.P.	73	70	95.89
	2,641	2,515	95.22
Attending private schools or schools outside the District	1,825	1,749	95.83

Comparative Percentages for the past three years:

	1952	1953	1954
Attending County Council Schools	94.21%	94.05%	95.22%
Attending private schools or schools outside the district	97.94%	97.46%	95.83%

VACCINATION

The speed of air travel makes the likelihood of the introduction of smallpox an ever-present possibility. Parents are exhorted to make use of this safety measure during the early months of their children's lives, and adequate facilities in each parish are made available for this purpose.

The following persons were vaccinated in 1954:—

	Under 1 yr.	1	2–4	5–14	15 *or over*	*Total*
Primary vaccination ..	250	10	9	10	16	295
Revaccination	—	2	7	44	113	166

Comparison with previous years:

	1952	1953	1954
Total primary vaccinations ..	260	296	295
Total revaccinations	135	120	166

Number of babies born in 1954	379
Number of babies under 1 year vaccinated in 1954	250
Percentage vaccinated in 1954	65.96%

	1952	1953	1954
Comparative percentages	58.91%	65.43%	65.96%

INFANT WELFARE CENTRES IN BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT

Name and address of Centre	*Sessions*
BATTLE: Council Offices	First Monday in month. (*incorporates Immunisation and Vaccination Clinic*)
BECKLEY: Parish Hall	First Tuesday in month. (*Weighing sessions only*)
BODIAM: Parish Room	Second Thursday in month.
BREDE and UDIMORE: The Hall, Broad Oak	Second Wednesday in month.
BURWASH: Congregational Hall ..	Fourth Thursday in month.
ETCHINGHAM: Village Hall ..	First Thursday in month. (*Weighing sessions only*)
FLIMWELL: Village Hall	Fourth Tuesday in month.
HURST GREEN: Village Hall ..	Second Tuesday in month.
IDEN and PLAYDEN: Memorial Hall, Peasmarsh ..	First Friday in month.
NORTHIAM: Women's Institute Hall ..	Third Tuesday in month.
ROBERTSBRIDGE: The Institute, Station Road ..	First and Third Tuesdays in month.
SEDLESCOMBE: Village Hall ..	First Thursday in month.
TICEHURST: Institute Hall ..	First Wednesday in month.
WESTFIELD: Church Hall ..	Third Tuesday in month.
WINCHELSEA: New Hall ..	Second Friday in month.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

(*a*) Provided by the East Sussex County Council under the Aegis of the County Medical Officer of Health

*(i) *Ambulance Service*

	1952		1953		1954	
	Cases	*Mileage*	*Cases*	*Mileage*	*Cases*	*Mileage*
Illness	459	14,829	555	15,164	566	17,759
Accidents	131	3,092	117	2,967	121	3,153
	590	17,921	672	18,131	687	20,912

Despite the increased calls on the volunteers of the Battle Branch of the St. John Ambulance Brigade over the years, it is an added tribute to them to state that all calls have been dealt with expeditiously, thus resulting in an exemplary service for which we must be grateful.

(ii) *Care of Expectant and Nursing Mothers and Children under School Age*

(iii) *Contraceptive Advice*

Subject to the limitation that advice is only given where pregnancy or childbirth is liable to be injurious to the health of the mother, arrangements are made for contraceptive advice to be given to married women at a clinic conducted by Hastings Corporation.

(iv) *District Nurses* (*Midwives*) *and Health Visitors*

(v) *Home Help Service*

(vi) *Hospital Car Service*

The Hospital Car Service in this county is provided by the joint organisation of the British Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Brigade. The Area Transport Office for this district is at 8 Endwell Road, Bexhill-on-Sea (Telephone Bexhill 125).

(vii) *Infant Welfare Centres*

See list of Centres on page 18.

*(viii) *Immunisation and Vaccination Service*

Please refer to pages 16 and 18.

(ix) *Mental Health Service*

(x) *Registration of Nursing Homes*

There are three efficiently-conducted registered Nursing Homes in this District.

(xi) *School Dental Service*

(xii) *School Medical Service* (**Routine medical examinations including the assessment of handicapped pupils*)

*Delegated duties to the District Medical Officer of Health.

(*b*) Hospitals

The following are the main hospitals providing accommodation and treatment for residents in the Battle Rural District:

Darvell Hall Sanatorium.
Battle Hospital, Battle.
Memorial Hospital, Rye Foreign.
Isolation Hospital, Tunbridge Wells.
Royal East Sussex Hospital, Hastings (including V.D. Clinic).
Mount Pleasant Isolation Hospital, Hastings.
St. Helen's Hospital, Hastings.
Fernbank Maternity Nursing Home, Hastings.
Buchanan Hospital, St. Leonards-on-Sea.
Eversfield Chest Hospital, St. Leonards-on-Sea.
St. Mary's Hospital, Eastbourne.
Princess Alice Hospital, Eastbourne.
Gildredge Isolation Hospital, Eastbourne.
Bexhill Hospital, Bexhill-on-Sea.
Hellingly Hospital, Hellingly.
Pembury Hospital, Pembury.
Kent and Sussex Hospital, Tunbridge Wells.
Fairlight Sanatorium, Fairlight.
Cottage Hospital, Hawkhurst.
Hill House, Rye Foreign.

Administered by the South-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board through their respective Hospital Management Committees.

(*c*) Public Health Laboratory Service

The Public Health Laboratory Service is a free national laboratory service designed to assist all those concerned in the diagnosis, prevention and control of communicable diseases. The benefits are not limited by health authority, hospital region or other administrative boundary. These facilities are available to all doctors, both for the submission of specimens and for consultation.

The address of the nearest laboratory is The Public Health Laboratory, Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton (Telephone, Brighton 23506, Director—Doctor J. E. Jameson).

(*d*) National Assistance Act, 1948

(i) *Section* 47: *Removal to Suitable Premises of Persons in Need of Care and Attention*

Fortunately, it was not found necessary to invoke these provisions during the year.

(ii) *Section* 50: *Burial or Cremation of the Dead*

Action was taken in one case under this Section.

(*e*) Home Physiotherapy Service

This voluntary service is much appreciated both by patients and doctors, and well deserves increased financial support.

(*f*) National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Liaison has been maintained.

ACCIDENTS IN THE HOME

During the last 10 years 57,413 people have died as a result of home accidents; 10,000 of this number occurred in children under 5 years of age.

From 1940 to 1949 over 60,000 people died from accidents in the home, compared with 48,000 from road accidents.

The fatal home accidents in England and Wales were as follows:

1949	4,904
1950	5,146
1951	5,434
1952	5,240
1953	5,895

Four-fifths of the fatal domestic accidents occur in children under 5 years of age and in persons of 65 years and over.

In a recent survey of children under 2 years of age it has been estimated that 3,000 are being treated annually in accident wards, 11,000 in out-patients' departments and 21,000 by general practitioners.

The most frequent types of fatal home accidents are as follows:

Falls, burns and scalds, coal-gas poisoning, suffocation and poisoning.

Falls leading to death occur most frequently in the elderly, and it would be wise if we all re-surveyed our own homes and considered the hazards which can be eliminated. Council houses should be surveyed similarly as opportunity occurs, and advice given to the tenants.

Many scalds are due to pan handles projecting over the sides of stoves and to teapots and cups of tea being placed precariously on edges of tables, just within reach of small children.

Too easily turned gas taps on stoves and fires which are badly sited give rise to coal-gas poisoning; this one easily preventible factor accounts for 10% of all accidents in the home.

The huge drug bill of the National Health Service bears witness to the vast amount of medicaments which are dispersed throughout the population, and so the familiar sugar-coated and possibly brightly coloured pill obtained at frequent intervals is thoughtlessly left lying about where young children are tempted to sample them, quite often with fatal results.

Official visitors to Council houses should be aware of these possibilities and point out the dangers of such practices.

The Council did circulate a special poster warning of this possibility, and these were exhibited in doctors' waiting rooms, chemists' shops, etc.

CLEAN FOOD

Every effort is made to educate the public in order that they may understand the reasons for insisting on exemplary hygienic standards in food handlers, and so be in a position to discriminate between those establishments taking all precautions and those who sell potentially dangerous products liable to endanger the health of their customers.

Food establishments are visited regularly and handlers advised on how to ensure that foodstuffs do not become contaminated by their actions or lack of care.

Personal hygiene is the mainstay of the campaign, the careful washing of hands after use of the lavatory as an instinctive action must be the goal, a sense of personal uncleanliness and unworthiness must remain if this essential is missed.

The inculcation of this simple discipline should be given the highest priority in all schools.

ICE CREAM

Six new premises were registered for the sale of ice cream during 1954, bringing the total to 132. Sixty-nine registered premises sell the wrapped product.

INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

Following the termination of meat rationing the Ministry of Food ceased to administer the Centralised Slaughterhouse at St. Leonards which catered for most of this District.

The twenty pre-war private slaughterhouses in the District were reviewed and many were found to be primitive and completely lacking in essential amenities, e.g. piped water supply.

Eight of these slaughterhouses were subsequently considered to be just adequate, thus the Council was enabled to approve slaughtering facilities where the need arose. It must, however, be accepted that these premises are, in the main, sub-standard.

Fortunately, the general quality of the meat was first-rate, only a small proportion of carcase meat was condemned.

TABLE OF CARCASES INSPECTED AND FOUND UNFIT

	Cattle	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Goats
Number killed	223	72	458	532	2
Number inspected	223	72	458	532	2
All diseases except Tuberculosis: whole carcases found unfit ..	—	1	—	1	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was found unfit	41	—	80	30	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	16.5%	1.3%	17.4%	5.8%	—
Tuberculosis only: Whole carcases found unfit ..	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was found unfit	12	—	—	14	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ..	5.6%	—	—	2.6%	—

Slaughterhouse at London Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea

In view of the fact that these small slaughterhouses could not serve all the butchers in the District the Council agreed to participate in a scheme for the joint operation of the St. Leonards slaughterhouse with the County Borough of Hastings and the Boroughs of Bexhill and Rye.

Food Found to be Unfit for Human Consumption

During the year, the undermentioned foodstuffs were found to be unfit for human consumption:

Beef, 213 lb.
Pork, 224 lb. 7 oz.
Offal, 43 lb. 13 oz.
Tinned meat, 50 lb.
Tinned fruit, 82 lb. 8 oz.
Tinned vegetables, 3 lb. 12 oz.
Tinned milk, 2 lb. 12 oz.
Bacon, 48 lb. 6 oz.
Vegetable fat, 24 lb. 8 oz.

MILK PRODUCTION

The following is a comparative estimate of the percentage of different types of milk produced in this District:

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
T.T. milk	20%	29.3%	35.3%	41.0%	47.5%	54.7%
Accredited milk ..	10%	5.4%	8.7%	5.1%	3.7%	—
Undesignated ..	70%	65.3%	55.9%	53.8%	48.8%	45.3%

It will be observed that the description " accredited milk " ceased to apply in October and milks of this type are therefore included under the heading " undesignated."

A large percentage of the " undesignated " milk is pasteurised, and from March, 1955, a new Order in Council prescribed that this area should only be allowed to distribute either T.T., pasteurised or sterilised milks; an added safety measure in the distribution of this vulnerable product.

Seventeen samples of milk were submitted for biological examination in order to test for Tubercle Bacilli and Brucellosis, the latter organism was found in four samples submitted from T.T. milk supplies and in one sample of ungraded milk.

In previous Annual Reports I have stressed the fallacy of accepting raw milk of any designation as free from infecting organisms, and once more confirmatory evidence is produced that T.T. raw milk is not wholly safe and may be a vehicle for transmitting diseases. Pasteurised milk is safe and the nutritional value is not impaired by the process of pasteurisation.

WATER SUPPLY

There are five Statutory Undertakings within the District:

Undertaking	*Parishes*
Battle Rural District Council.. ..	Battle, Crowhurst, Whatlington, Mountfield, Playden, Iden, Rye Foreign and part of Peasmarsh.
Hastings Corporation	Parts of Westfield, Guestling, Pett, Fairlight, Icklesham including Winchelsea and Rye Harbour, and part of Ore.
Heathfield and District Water Co. ..	Burwash, Etchingham, Hurst Green, Robertsbridge, Bodiam and Ticehurst.
Cranbrook and District Water Co. ..	Northiam.
Bexhill Corporation	Ashburnham, Catsfield and part of Crowhurst.

Personnel of the Water Engineer's Department were blood-tested in order to eliminate the possibility of a carrier state with consequent pollution of water supply. This is arranged with the helpful co-operation of the Pathologist of the Royal East Sussex Hospital, Hastings. The results did not indicate any past or present disease likely to affect the purity of the water supply.

All new employees of the Heathfield and District Water Company were similarly blood-tested.

Other Piped Supplies

Toot Rock, Pett Level

This privately-owned supply serves 54 houses in the Pett Level area only. The source is a shallow well and the water of dubious purity in the raw state. Following filtration and chlorination, five samples were taken for bacteriological examination with satisfactory results.

Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company

This company supplies filtered and chlorinated water to 78 properties on this estate and to 39 houses on the Warren Estate.

Ten reports were submitted by this undertaking during the year and nine were satisfactory. One sample failed to reach a satisfactory standard bacteriologically, and on investigation was found to be due to a defective pilot valve, coupled with the carelessness of the engineer in charge.

Seven check samples were taken by the Council for bacteriological and chemical examinations, of which one proved unsatisfactory. Investigation revealed that the recent heavy rain had considerably diluted the dosage of chlorine and presumably the available chlorine was insufficient to render this supply safe.

I am not satisfied that the filtration of this water supply is entirely satisfactory, particularly after heavy rains, when the water appears

opalescent after treatment. The Company has been approached regarding remedial measures but has not accepted the advice given. The quality of the water therefore remains indifferent and the purity depends on the strict attention to chlorination by the Company's employee.

Warren Estate. Thirty-nine house on this estate depend on the Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company.

The Hastings Corporation were asked to apply for an Order under Section 9 of the Water Act, 1945, to enable them to supply this Estate, but did not consider that the available evidence regarding the quality and adequacy of the supply warranted this action.

Evidence is therefore being accumulated in the form of chemical analyses and bacteriological examinations for future consideration.

Firehills Estate Water Company, Fairlight

This company restricts its filtered water supply to its own estate, comprising 102 houses, and operates a system of rationing during the summer months by supplying water to each of nine sectors in turn, so that individual houses have their storage tanks filled once a day.

Six samples of water were taken for bacteriological examination, of which four proved satisfactory. A chlorination plant was advised and the company placed an order immediately.

The following table summarises the results of bacteriological sampling of public supplies by this Council:

Undertaking	*Satisfactory*	*Unsatisfactory*
Toot Rock, Pett Level	5	0
Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company	6	1
Firehills Estate, Fairlight	4	2
Battle Rural District Council, Peasmarsh Supply	14	0
Battle Rural District Council, Battle Supply	11	0

These main water supplies are not liable to Plumbo Solvent action.

New Schemes and Extensions

Central Parishes

It is hoped that the successful completion of this scheme will be sufficient to supply the following parishes:

Mountfield, Whatlington, Sedlescombe and Ewhurst.

Peasmarsh

This Council-owned supply was extended to supply a further 20 properties.

A connection has been available for Peasmarsh School since November, 1952, but no action has been taken by the Education Authority to avail themselves of this facility up to date. It will be noted that the existing supply is metafiltered from a shallow well. I hope this unsatisfactory state of affairs will be resolved in the very near future.

Winchelsea Beach

The laying of the water main to Winchelsea Beach was well advanced by the end of the year.

Camber (Principal Main)

The new main from Hastings has progressed through Guestling and Icklesham and beyond Winchelsea (Town).

Moat Lane and Kent Street, Westfield

In May the Council decided to requisition a supply of water for this area from Hastings Corporation.

Brede and Udimore

The Hastings Corporation was requisitioned to supply water for the village of Brede and to the area of Broad Oak between Chitcombe and Broadlands. The extension of this scheme to Wick Corner would enable Udimore to be supplied, and accordingly a survey was made of this latter area with the following results:

Properties visited	105
Willing to connect to new main	80
Refused to connect to new main	13
Undecided	8
No reply	4

Brightling and Dallington

Negotiations with the Heathfield and District Water Company to secure a supply for the villages of Brightling and Dallington made some progress. At a late stage the Bexhill Corporation withdrew their consent (under pressure from the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries) to transfer north Ashburnham to the Heathfield and District Water Company's Statutory area. This involved the revision of the scheme, which is till the subject of negotiation.

DISTRIBUTION OF PIPED WATER IN THE PARISHES

Parish	Properties directly connected to main				Premises supplied by meter			
	1954	1953	1952	1951	1954	1953	1952	1951
Ashburnham	38	38	38	—	—	—	—	—
Battle	1,342	1,316	1,280	1,224	155	148	145	142
Bodiam	127	127	127	127	—	—	—	—
Burwash	560	560	540	534	—	—	—	—
Catsfield	181	170	166	164	—	—	—	—
Crowhurst	177	175	175	169	37	37	37	41
Etchingham	218	218	213	213	—	—	—	—
Guestling*	334	267	159	100	—	—	—	—
Hurst Green	250	250	249	247	—	—	—	—
Icklesham (Winchelsea)	248	243	220	218	—	—	17	17
Icklesham (Rye Harbour)	111	111	111	111	—	—	17	17
Icklesham (Parish)	143	131	66	35	—	—	—	—
Iden	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Mountfield	7	7	7	6	—	—	—	—
Northiam	384	372	369	361	17	17	17	16
Ore	80	78	64	64	—	—	—	—
Peasmarsh	73	53	—	—	3	1	1	—
Playden	61	61	51	44	6	7	6	7
Rye Foreign	19	20	19	19	4	4	3	3
Salehurst	470	470	469	452	—	—	—	—
Ticehurst	747	747	731	719	—	—	—	—
Westfield	290	261	219	205	—	—	—	—
Whatlington	19	18	4	4	—	—	—	—
Total	5,881	5,695	5,279	5,018	223	215	244	244

*Including the parishes of Pett, Fairlight and that part of Guestling known as Three Oaks.

The figure for Peasmarsh reflects the further extension completed during the year.

The continued improvement in connections to main water supplies to Guestling and Icklesham follows the line of the new main from Hastings in the direction of Camber.

Other increases indicate the connections of new houses to existing water mains.

Wells and Springs

Water sampling and advice to householders, farmers, etc., on methods of improving individual supplies by protecting wells and springs has occupied a large proportion of the Sanitary Inspectors' time and reflects the great need for piped water throughout the District.

One hundred and eighty-eight samples of water were submitted for chemical analysis and bacteriological examination during 1954.

WATER SAMPLES TAKEN FROM NEW AND SUSPECT SOURCES

Parish	Wells		Springs	
	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory
Beckley	3	5	—	3
Brede	1	—	—	—
Brightling	—	1	2	—
Ditto (Chem.) ..	1	—	—	—
Broomhill	2	—	—	—
Catsfield	1	—	—	—
Crowhurst	—	1	—	—
Dallington	1	—	—	1
Ewhurst	4	11	—	2
Ditto (Chem.) ..	1	—	—	—
Fairlight	1	1	—	—
Ditto (Chem.) ..	1	—	—	—
Guestling	3	4	—	—
Hurst Green	1	—	—	—
Icklesham	1	—	—	—
Iden	5	3	—	—
Mountfield	1	—	—	—
Northiam	2	—	—	—
Ditto (Chem.) ..	1	—	—	—
Ore	1	—	—	—
Peasmarsh	3	3	2	—
Pett	1	—	—	—
Playden	—	2	—	—
Rye Foreign	1	3	—	—
Salehurst	—	3	—	—
Sedlescombe	—	1	—	—
Ticehurst	—	1	—	—
Udimore	1	2	2	2
Ditto (Chem.) ..	1	—	—	—
Westfield	10	15	—	—
Whatlington	—	1	1	—
	43 Bact. 5 Chem.	57	7	8

In addition, two samples taken from rain-water tanks at Broomhill and Iden respectively were found to be unsatisfactory, and one sample taken from a borehole at Whatlington proved satisfactory.

SCHOOL WATER SUPPLIES

School	Results of Samples		Delivered water or well	Action taken and present position
	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory		
Beckley ..	1	—	Delivered	—
Brede	2	—	Delivered	—
Dallington ..	1	—	Well	Metafiltered
Ewhurst ..	—	—	—	Adjacent source utilised
Fairlight ..	—	—	Well	Metafiltered
Mountfield ..	2	—	Delivered	—
Peasmarsh ..	3	1	Well	Metafilter cleaned
Playden ..	1	—	Delivered	—
Sedlescombe	—	—	Delivered	—

PARISH SPRINGS AND WELLS

All parish springs are considered to be unsatisfactory with the exception of Sedlescombe and Whatlington.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

(*a*) Ticehurst Sewerage Scheme

The disposal works were completed in March. The second instalment was commenced and will include the sewering of the remaining village area and Dale Hill.

(*b*) Burwash Sewerage Scheme

The Burwash Village Sewerage Scheme was commenced in April and about one-third of the work has been completed.

(*c*) Northiam Sewerage Scheme

The first instalment is nearing completion and application has been made for consent to carry on the second instalment which will provide a new settlement tank and filter plus drainage for Northiam Village.

(*d*) Winchelsea Sewage Disposal Works

Detailed proposals for the construction of new treatment works in an inconspicuous position at Winchelsea have been prepared by Messrs. John Taylor & Sons, the Council's Consulting Engineers, and it is hoped that work will be commenced during 1955.

(*e*) Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach

A scheme for this area was submitted to the Minister of Housing and Local Government in October.

(*f*) Camber Sands

The Ministry of Housing and Local Government approved this scheme in principle in November, but informed the Council that it could not proceed during the current financial year.

(*g*) Fairlight Sewerage Scheme

A scheme for this area was submitted to the Minister of Housing and Local Government in September.

(*h*) Improvements to Battle Sewage Works

A scheme was approved by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in August, work was commenced forthwith, satisfactory progress was recorded.

(*i*) Asten Fields and North Trade Road, Battle

The development of the Asten Fields Housing Site will necessitate a small extension to the Battle Sewage Works. The new sewer will serve the new Battle Secondary Modern School and a few properties on the south side of North Trade Road. Reasonable progress was recorded.

REFUSE COLLECTION

The reorganised service operated smoothly throughout the year, a fortnightly collection being maintained in all but a small, scattered area of the District where the interval was sixteen days.

Towards the end of the year the Battle refuse tip was filled and a new site was found in Great Crabden Wood, Mountfield, on the property of the Gypsum Mines, Ltd., who were most public-spirited throughout the negotiations.

A new tip was commenced in Guestling Wood on the property of the Broomham Estates, whose co-operation was much appreciated.

All the Council's tips are controlled, sprayed against flies and treated by the Council's rat-catcher at regular intervals.

Salvage

The results of the year's collection are summarised below:

Material	*Tons*	*cwt.*	*qrs.*	*lb.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Waste paper	95	4	3	0	636	13	8
Rags	5	2	3	0	128	8	9
Ferrous metals ..	18	15	2	0	75	2	0
Non-ferrous metals ..	2	19	1	9	258	0	11
TOTALS	122	2	1	9	£1,098	5	4

CESSPOOL EMPTYING

The unsatisfactory situation outlined in my last Annual Report continued in large measure, despite repeated assurances from the private contractor.

The Council decided to order a vehicle and operate its own cesspool emptying service from 1st April, 1955.

INDUSTRIES

The numbers engaged in the main varied industries located in the District are given in the table on page 31.

Hop-pickers' Camps

Conditions were generally good and the point has now been reached when maintenance and not general reconstruction is the salient feature.

However, inspections prior to the opening of the camps and supervision during the picking are necessary to maintain a good standard of health and hygiene.

Machines are being installed which are displacing the resident pickers in large measure.

The tendency is to use local pickers to supplement the machines whenever possible. The larger growers run special buses into the Hastings and Battle area daily. Messrs. Guinness imported an average of 870 daily pickers during this last season.

Incidentally, Messrs. Guinness have built up an excellent medical service which includes a local General Practitioner, trained nurses, an emergency ward and their own ambulance for the acute cases.

No cases of infectious disease were notified and the general health was good despite the depressing damp weather.

It was noted that picking in the rain was apparently preferable to sitting about in the huts, maybe the relayed " Music as you work " had some beneficial effect.

Doctor H. M. Elliott, B.A., M.B., B.Ch., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., representing the Ministry of Health, inspected the camps during hop-picking, and subsequently a letter was received from the Minister expressing satisfaction with the general arrangements.

NUMBERS ENGAGED IN THE MAIN INDUSTRIES

	At 31st December, 1954 Male	Female	Total	At 31st December 1953 Total
Bakery	21	20	41	41
Beach works	46	—	46	47
Building trade	466	14	480	429
Concrete works	128	10	138	147
Egg packing station	14	16	30	30
Engineering works	294	19	313	268
Fencing contractors	22	3	25	22
Flour mills	48	16	64	60
Gypsum mines	689	15	704	668
Hop gardens (permanent staff—Guinness's)	118	6	124	97
Jam factory	20	40	60	55
Joinery works	24	—	24	23
Laundries	13	52	65	66
Oil refining	3	—	3	4
Printing works	4	—	4	4
Sawmills	71	1	72	83
Sports ground contractors	16	1	17	36
Tannery	16	1	17	19
(Sports goods manufacturers	46	12	58)	
(Wooden toy manufacturers	14	26	40)	95

Appreciable increases are noted in the number of employees in building, gypsum mining and the hop-gardens.

Working conditions were generally good and employers have co-operated where necessary.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Twenty inspections under the Factories Act, 1937, were made during the year, resulting in one notice being served under Section 9. The work required was satisfactorily completed.

There are no outworkers under Section 110 (1) (*c*) in this District.

HOUSING

The following information is in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health:

1. Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year

(i)	(*a*) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health or Housing Acts)	422
	(*b*) Number of inspections made for this purpose	885
(ii)	(*a*) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925, and 1932	187
	(*b*) Number of inspections made for this purpose	187
(iii)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	12
(iv)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	410

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	168

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year

(*A*) *Proceedings under Sections* 9, 10 *and* 16 *of the Housing Act*, 1936:

(i)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	Nil
(ii)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:	
	(*a*) By owners	Nil
	(*b*) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil
(iii)	Number of dwelling-houses acquired and subsequently rendered fit by the Local Authority	Nil

(*B*) *Proceedings under the Public Health Acts:*

(i)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	6
(ii)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:	
	(*a*) By owners	4
	(*b*) By Local Authority in default of owner	Nil

(*C*) *Proceedings under Sections* 11 *and* 13 *of the Housing Act*, 1936:

(i) Number of representations, etc., made in respect of dwelling-houses unfit for habitation	12
(ii) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	9
(iii) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	8
(iv) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which undertakings were accepted from owners:	
(*a*) To render the house fit for human habitation	Nil
(*b*) As to usage other than for human habitation	1

(*D*) *Proceedings under Section* 12 *of the Housing Act*, 1936:

(i) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ..	Nil
(ii) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit ..	Nil

HOUSING ACT, 1949—SECTION 20, IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Many picturesque and well-sited cottages completely lacking in amenities were falling into increasing decay due to the very low rentals which were tied to the Rent Restrictions Act. Capable of being made good only at unreasonable cost, the owners were naturally reluctant and unable to expend large capital sums with no hope of adequate return.

The advent of the Improvement Grant has allowed these owners to construct bathrooms and other necessary amenities, and incidentally repair properties generally, so making houses available which were not just "patched" but equipped with modern amenities. The Council has thus been enabled to fix more equitable rentals and so lift the dead hand of the Rent Restrictions Act. Owners of tied agricultural properties have been quick to see the wisdom of accepting this offer.

With full employment, good agricultural workers have been able to choose farms which offer better housing. Farmers with poor cottages have been left with the less satisfactory types of farm workers who are forced to accept these primitive conditions. The alternative for them being eviction and temporary accommodation by the County Welfare Authority, as many do not possess resident qualifications for rehousing by the Local Authority.

I have noted the frequent changes in tenancy of these properties and also the fairly large proportion of these shifting families who have children who are educationally sub-normal, they keep recurring in the same addresses as the previous tenants move on.

Improvement Grants

Sixty-seven properties were investigated for Improvement Grants.

Six applications were refused as the properties did not conform to the standards laid down and two applications were subsequently withdrawn.

Analysis of the properties improved reveals that 25 were owner/occupied, 28 were dwellings for agricultural workers and six were non-agricultural tenants.

This resulted in a total of 59 improved properties, plus seven extra dwellings as the result of conversions.

Housing Provided by the Local Authority

1939	433
1946	437
1947	540
1948	698
1949	746
1950	831
1951	895
1952	993
1953	1,083
1954	1,117 plus 62 under construction.

Ninety-three applicants were rehoused during 1954 (actual number of persons 280).

457 applicants were on the Register at the end of the year.

Details of Water Supply to Council Houses

947 houses are on the main water supplies; 170 houses have other supplies, as outlined below.

Estate	*No. of dwellings*	*Present water supply*
Beckley, Four Oaks	8	Delivered to site by Works Engineer's vehicle
Beckley, Burnt House Cottages	4	Well
Beckley, Yew Tree Cottages ..	4	Well
Beckley, Coombs Cottages ..	12	Estate supply piped to each dwelling
Brede, Oakhill Drive	13	Two wells
Brede, Gillysite	4	Delivered to site by Works Engineer's vehicle
Brede, Woodside	10	Two wells
Brightling, Park View ..	4	Well
Dallington, South Lane ..	2	Well

Ewhurst, Rose's Field ..	6	Delivered to site by Works Engineer's vehicle
Ewhurst, Sidegates	4	Ditto
Ewhurst, Scows Down ..	2	Ditto
Iden, Elmsmead Cottages ..	13	Ditto
Mountfield, Castle Gardens ..	2	Well
Mountfield, Brickfield Cottages	2	Delivered to site by Works Engineer's vehicle
Peasmarsh, Park View ..	22	Ditto
Sedlescombe, Meadowside ..	4	Well
Sedlescombe, East View Terrace	32	Estate supply piped to each dwelling
Sedlescombe, Blacklands ..	10	Ditto
Udimore, Lower Cross Cottages	12	Ditto

WATER SAMPLES—COUNCIL HOUSES NOT ON MAIN WATER

	Tank (Delivered water)	Well	Result		Action taken
			Satis.	Unsat.	
Beckley (3 estate wells	—	8	4	4	2 wells cleaned, check samples satisfactory.; 1 well. Warning notice posted "To boil"
Brede (2 estates) ..	—	4	1	3	Warning notices posted "To boil"
Brightling	—	1	1	—	—
Dallington	—	—	—	—	Warning notice posted "To boil"
Ewhurst including Staplescross (3 estates) ..	6	—	5	1	Tanks cleaned
Iden	2	—	1	1	Tank cleaned.
Mountfield	1	—	1	—	—
Peasmarsh	1	—	1	—	—
Sedlescombe ..	—	—	—	—	Warning notice posted "To boil"
Udimore (piped to each house) ..	—	2	1	1	Storage tank cleaned
	10	15	15	10	

Eighty-seven Council houses do not have water closets.

The integrity and stability of the present-day Council-house tenant is exemplified by the following table:

Year ending	*Total rent collectible* £ s. d.	*Percentage of arrears*
31st March, 1951	43,238 8 1	.29
31st March, 1952	52,393 12 10	.105
31st March, 1953	58,755 2 5	.004
31st March, 1954	66,918 9 10	.02
31st March, 1955	70,307 7 6	.05

The Housing Committee and the Housing Manager have continued to give wise and sympathetic consideration to all my requests for rehousing, and I am grateful for this excellent teamwork which is so vital for the successful culmination of these joint efforts.

NEW DWELLINGS

New Dwellings Erected during 1954:

(*a*) By the Council:

Northiam	8 houses
Ticehurst	14 houses
Westfield	26 houses
(*b*) By private enterprise	89 houses
(*c*) By private enterprise (war destroyed) ..	1 house
Conversions to dwelling-houses	14 new units

Dwellings in Course of Erection 31st December, 1954:

(*a*) By the Council	38 houses 24 flats
(*b*) By private enterprise	38 houses

COMPARATIVE TABLE—PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY

	Private Enterprise		Local Authority
	New dwellings	Conversions	
1949	54	7	48
1950	37	9	85
1951	25	13	64
1952	37	13	98
1953	86	6	90
1954	90	14	48

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS—COASTAL AREAS

The usual seasonal influx of caravans to the coastal areas kept one Sanitary Inspector fully employed as well as a Sunday roster of duties for two other Sanitary Inspectors.

Rigorous enforcement of the Public Health Act has been necessary to conserve the health of the people who have been attracted to this delightful coast.

Caravans were recorded on entry and kept under observation throughout their stay.

HOUSE REQUISITIONING

Three properties were under requisition at 1st January, 1954. These were de-requisitioned during the year.

BUILDING LICENSING

This work became less onerous as controls were relaxed and finally ceased on 11th November.

VISITS OF SANITARY INSPECTORS DURING 1954

Subject:	
Drainage and sewage disposal	1,558
Water supplies	1,080
Milk and dairies	86
Building inspections	1,268
Hop-pickers' dwellings	84
Infectious diseases	58
Food premises	105
Housing and Public Health Acts	885
Moveable dwellings	490
Nuisances (not housing)	157
Verminous premises	17
Factories and workshops	20
Schools	29
Slaughterhouses	386
Public Cleansing	12
Town planning	133
Miscellaneous	680
Total	7,048

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The Council employ one rat-catcher, trained to use modern methods, and this man's work has proved most effective.

Permanent baiting points are maintained at the principal refuse tips, and the public sewers are treated annually in accordance with the routine approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The table overleaf summarises the results of the operator's work during the twelve months ending 31st March, 1955:

	Type of Property				
	Local Authority	Dwelling houses	Agricultural	All other (including business and industrial)	Total
I. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District	22	10,396	1,150	1,475	13,043
II. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority as a result of					
(*a*) notification	(*a*) 1	229	—	42	272
(*b*) Survey under the Act	(*b*) 12	217	17	28	274
(*c*) otherwise	(*c*) 9	—	20	50	79
III. Number of properties (under II) found to be infested by rats	Major 3	5	2	5	15
	Minor 10	245	1	36	292
IV. Number of properties (under II) found to be infested with mice	Major —	1	—	4	5
	Minor —	42	—	22	64
V. Number of infested properties (under III and IV) treated by the Local Authority	13	260	3	32	308

METEOROLOGY

Rainfall Figures taken at Battle Water Works

	1954	1953
Number of days on which rain fell	177	141
Longest period of drought ..	24 days	32 days
Period of drought	7th-30th April (inclusive)	23rd Feb.-26th March (inclusive)

Comparison with previous years is given in the following table:

Year	*Total rainfall*
1947	28.1 inches
1948	28.5 inches
1949	27.3 inches
1950	32.1 inches
1951	45.0 inches
1952	35.1 inches
1953	26.1 inches
1954	37.0 inches

Temperature

Highest recorded temperature for 1954 .. 83° on 28th May

Lowest recorded temperature for 1954 .. 10° on 5th February

(I am indebted to Mr. G. A. Bramley, Water Engineer, for this information.)